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ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY

INDIANAPOLIS (19 Nov. 2001)—At the urging of the American sheep industry, USDA recently approved a federal rule to establish new national requirements for the permanent identification of sheep and goats. This program, now in effect, presents a new, industry-sanctioned approach to disease eradication, and will likely generate a number of questions.

Many Hoosier sheep and goat producers have already received notification from the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA). USDA contracted NIAA to deliver the information about the new program. However, some components of NIAA's information do not apply to Hoosier producers. What's more, NIAA's mailing list was obtained from the Indiana Sheep Association's database; therefore, all sheep and goat owners impacted by the new rule may not have received timely, accurate notice of this important federal law. Please refer to the following points and the attached chart as a guide to how the new program will operate in Indiana.

PLEASE NOTE: The identification program is **not** the same as the voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP). Official identification program is required of all sheep and goat owners; SFCP is not. Because SFCP participants must meet requirements beyond identification, that official tagging system meets all requirements for the new identification initiative.

Key aspects of the new federal rule:

- Most sheep and goats being moved for sale, slaughter or exhibition must be permanently identified with a unique premise identification (PREMID) number, assigned by the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH), and an individual animal ID number on an official tag. **NOTE:** Refer to attached chart for general tagging guidelines.
- Sheep and goat owners, as well as accredited veterinarians and market operators, can receive official identification tags *at no charge* from an approved supplier. A PREMID must be assigned by a BOAH Ruminant Division staff member (**phone: 877/747-3038 ext. 315**) before tag orders can be processed. Indiana's official ID is a white plastic swivel tag. Metal ear tags were not selected for use in Indiana, as they deteriorate, tear out of the ear more readily, and tend to cause unnecessary necrosis. Producers may choose to order custom-designed tags from an approved supplier, with a specific numbering series or an alternate style; however, the producer must incur any charges for customized tags. (Assigned PREMID must appear on custom tags.)
- Sheep and goat owners (including markets, practitioners and others who tag animals) must retain written records of all sales, purchases and movements for a minimum of five years.
- Beginning Jan. 1, 2002, the flock of birth and/or origin must be listed on all certificates of veterinary inspection (health certificates) issued on sheep and goats.
- To be valid, all certificates of veterinary inspection must include a specific destination for the animal (e.g., "North American Livestock Show; Louisville, KY" is acceptable; "open show" is not). All required statements must be complete, along with a notation of each animal's individual ID and PREMID numbers (from ear tag).

To maintain open borders for interstate and international trade, all Hoosier sheep and goat owners must comply with the new federal rule to achieve a "consistent" state status for Indiana. This program applies uniformly to all states. Ultimately, the intent of this industry-driven program is to eradicate scrapie from the United States by 2017—a goal to improve the worldwide market for American lamb and breeding animals.

Questions about the new rule can be directed to Dr. David Hawkins, Indiana Scrapie Epidemiologist, at BOAH by phone at 317/227-0315 or by email at animalhealth@boah.state.in.us.

Federal Sheep and Goat Identification Guidelines

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- 1: "Tag" refers to officially recognized ear tags and/or recognized registration tattoo as part of the federal ID program or an official tag used within a Scrapie Flock Certification Program. Poll/back tags can be used only as noted below by *.
- 2: Tags must be ordered through the Indiana State Board of Animal Health's Ruminant Division (phone: 877/747-3038 ext. 315), after a premise identification (PREMID) has been assigned.
- 3: Animals officially identified by a registration tattoo must be accompanied by the original registration paper and/or Certificate of Veterinary Inspection at all movements, or the animal's tattoo must be preceded by the state postal code (e.g., IN) to be considered official. A PREMID, assigned by BOAH, is still required on all flocks/herds in which tattoos are used.
- 4: Tags should be applied to all animals entering/leaving a flock (unless animal already bears an official tag).
- 5: Records of all purchases, sales and movements must be kept for at least 5 years.
- 6: As of Jan. 1, 2002, the flock of birth (if unknown, flock of origin) must be listed on the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (health certificate) for all sheep and goats. (Flock of origin is the site where the animal was last bred and/or lambbed/kidded.)
- 7: Animals designated scrapie-positive, -suspect, or high-risk are subject to different requirements. Contact BOAH for more information.
- 8: Situations noted by **(Tag)** are requirements specific to Indiana.
- 9: Current state law requires official identification of all exhibition animals.

DESTINATION	To Exhibition	Market To Farm	Farm To Farm	Farm To Market	Direct To Slaughter
Producer Documentation Required:	Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (Footnote 1)		Maintain Records	Owner Statement	Maintain Records
FEMALES: Ewes, Nannies/Does					
Under 18 months of age (Footnote 2)	Tag	Tag	Tag	(Tag)	—
More than 18 months of age	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag*
Dairy/Milking purpose, any age	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag*
MALES: Rams, Billies/Bucks					
Under 18 months of age	Tag	(Tag)	(Tag)	(Tag)	—
More than 18 months of age	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag*
WETHERS: Neutered (Footnote 3)					
Under 18 months of age	—	—	—	—	—
More than 18 months of age	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag	Tag*

Footnote 1: Certificate of Veterinary Inspection must specify an animal's flock of birth and origin, if different.

Footnote 2: Young ewes/nannies/does must not be bred or previously lambbed/kidded or aborted.

Footnote 3: All exhibition wethers must be individually identified under current Indiana law.

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For more information, contact:
Indiana State Board of Animal Health
 Ruminant Division

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